Sorry to be so tardy responding to your 12/31, which came promptly. It is a combination of the phlebitis slowing me down, a trip I had to make and matters I could not postpone. Since the short but rather intense trip I find myself not coming back as fast as in the past and am pretty tired by suppertime. Or, right now, after eating.

I am in the awkward position of wanting to be informed and not being able to take time for responses....Thanks for what you said about PM. ...On editing, when I can't get any kind of help except occasional transportation when I shouldn't drive, no chance. I've been trying intermitently for eight years. Two commercial editing jobs were not helpful to those books. There is also the utter impossibility of my wife doing any more. The imposeible is that and worrying about it does no more than generate frustrations. If there can be commercial interest in a book, that is different. The publisher supplies it. But my immediate problem is getting time to do any writing at all. So, while it is true that the writing tends to assume a certain amount of knowledge on the part of the reader, a large mail is singularly without complaint about it. Were such a book published commercially there would be a different reactions. Particularly from reviewers.

Alba: Garrison's office saw him. I know no more and expect no more despite Garrison's belief that with federal cars parked in his place he had to be on the in.

I agree that if true Alba's statement that he helped affix rivets to the sling would be important. However, I don't see any reason why Oswald would have taken a rifle all that far when he could have rivetted at home with virtually no expense and with rivets Alba could have given him. I also find it hard to believe he would not have told this to the FBI and more, desparate as they were for any confirmation of Marina in particular, why the FBI would not have reported it. No such documents and I've gone over them all, including what had been withheld that I forced out and gave to another, on the coupon and the fingerprinting of the magazines. My impression is that the FBI wanted nothing from Alba it could avoid and avoided much of what he may have said. But not this. They needed it too much.

Anyone who worked for Reily and didn't switch to the Latin plants had rocks in his head. The difference in pay scale alone was enormous...Long ago I read Alba's testimony and I can't now. But if there are suggestion you would like me to have on file for when I can do it again, at that writing time, please send them....On Aynesworth and the media, agreed. And I'll take Hudkins' word over his any day. Golz is a good reporter with not good judgement. If it makes a story he has no further concern... Oswald's receipt of envelopes from the FBI could account for him hanging around in Alba's garage, but why run this risk when Oswald had a postal box accross the street? That "the driver of the vehicle would necessarily have had his back to Mr. Alba" is true only if he were careless and didn't look. They it would have been his rights side until he turned to the driver's window....If you want me to go over what you do not say at the end of #12, I'll do it. But I do not believe it likely than any federal agent would have shared his suspicions with anyone, least of all one sure to be called as a wtiness...Assume that Oswald, like most young men, had some interest in weapons. In itself this means nothing. Assume he was goofing off at Alba's. What else could they talk about?... I don't pretend to know the answers and I can't prove any of this is wrong. I'm trying to think with you and to provide some devil's advocacy....On Aynesworth, why not do some rethinking based on two assumptions: he likes money and he had a federal connection of his own. Theorize on the latter and believe the former. Hudkins was the least of his competitors. Lonnie worked for a Houston paper, not Dallas. When Aynesworth moved to Houston, for Newsweek, Lonnie had left. Aynesworth had two Cadillacs, not par for reporters. A dependable reporter from Houston is my source.

There is something you might consider about false or cover stories: they are more easily remember if they are connected with a reality that can stay in the mind. Would it do any good to review some of your observations with this in mind? Would it suggest anything to you? Do you think the federals, whether or not only the FBI, used Alba's garage without some security, including a check on him? When a car could be wired for a bomb in seconds, the explosive and two spring clips? Or a heat-sensitive one rigged to the exhaust pipe? Muffler?...Many questions to consider without visible answers does not make it easier but there are missing answers and there is no confirm-

ation of which I know. One of the keys to analysis and understanding is there was a disinvestigation rather than an investigation. This does not make it easier...However it is my recollection that the FBI was avoiding something with Alba. Maybe what I can't recall clearly had to do with magazines. I remember the story of the talk of buying a rifle, not including a pistol...Don't know if I've been helpful and can't take time to correct.Even typing not easy. Have to sit with legs up. To do this I had to do what is forbidden, use tools. I made a pedestal t'writer table what while not too steady permits straddling much less comfomfortably. But with a foam pad even the hoels get to hurting. But I'm trying to do it by the book, by and large, and except for rare occasions obey the injunctions. But the legs now say "quit." So, again thanks for your good wishes and a fine year to you. Sincerely

1/20/76 Airgram to Ian MacFarlane. Alba and Aynesworth statements in their files.